



Parent Page

Look at Me: I Can Celebrate Hanukkah

By Maxine Segal Handelman

Dear Parent,

Happy Hanukkah! Your child has been exploring ***Look at Me: I Can Celebrate Hanukkah*** in school. This booklet introduces children to the key vocabulary of Hanukkah, including: menorah, latkes, blessings, and dreidel. Activities teach Hanukkah traditions while reinforcing key learning-readiness skills, such as counting, recognizing colors, and making size comparisons. For example, students count Hanukkah candles, point to blue dreidels, and differentiate between large and small plates of *sufganiyot* (jelly doughnuts).

When you share this *Look at Me* booklet with your child, you create an important link between your child's experiences at school and at home. What better way to celebrate Hanukkah than to invite your child to tell you the story and, in response, hear an enthusiastic rendition inspired by the pages of this booklet!

Bringing *Look at Me* to Life

Many pages of this *Look at Me* booklet include drawings of little bears. These bears help bring the activities to life and ask us to consider the content of the page in new ways:

- Sometimes the bears suggest a physical activity, such as “Try standing up tall like the SHAMASH!” (page 5). This activity allows your child to experience the concept of the *shamash*—the helper candle, which stands taller than the other candles—with his or her whole body, leading to deeper learning. Encourage your child to do the activity and take part yourself. Then add some variations of your own, such as “Try melting like a candle” or “Try sizzling like a latke.”
- Sometimes the bears propose verbal activities, such as “Can you say ‘lots of latkes’ three times fast?” Listen to your child try saying the tongue-twister. Then, help your child practice saying some of the Hebrew words of Hanukkah out loud, such as menorah and *sufganiyot*.

Enriching Your Hanukkah Celebration

As you delve into *Look at Me: I Can Celebrate Hanukkah*, consider the many activities you can initiate that build on, expand, and enrich the activities in the booklet. For example, you might:

- Go on a menorah hunt in your house. Invite your child to compare your menorah to the ones on the pages of the *Look at Me* booklet.
- Practice singing the blessings over the Hanukkah candles. See the back of this page or visit www.behrmanhouse.com/family.
- Dance to some fun, modern Hanukkah music, such as *8 Nights of Joy* by Rabbi Joe Black with the Maxwell Street Klezmer Band, *Celebrate Hanukkah* produced by Craig Taubman, or *ShirLaLa Chanukah* by Shira Kline.

- Take your child along when you shop for gifts for others, or have your child help make gifts for others. Talk about the experience of giving (page 12). Ask your child what it feels like to receive a gift and to give a gift that someone really likes?
- Read some wonderful Hanukkah storybooks with your child, such as *Latkes, Latkes Good to Eat* by Naomi Howland (Clarion), *When Mindy Saved Hanukkah* by Eric Kimmel (Scholastic), and *Hanukkah* by Cathy Goldberg Fishman (Kar-Ben).

Time for Grown-Ups

Hanukkah is a holiday for the whole family—children and grown-ups alike. This Hanukkah, take time to consider the meaning of the holiday and its prayers in your own life.

One Hanukkah prayer is called *Al HaNisim*, which means “On account of the miracles.” *Al HaNisim* thanks God for the miracles that God has granted the Jewish people from the time of our ancestors until today. The miracles of Hanukkah include the Jewish victory over the massive Greek army over 2,000 years ago. But miracles, as *Al HaNisim* teaches, are not reserved only for stories of long ago. What miracles happen in your and your family’s lives?

May your dreidels spin for hours and your latkes be perfectly crispy.

B’simchah – In joy and celebration!

Hanukkah Blessings

First Blessing (Over the Hanukkah Candles):

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech ha’olam,
asher kid’shanu b’mitzvotav v’tzivanu l’hadlik
ner shel Chanukkah.*

ברוך אתה, יי אלהינו, מלך העולם,
אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להדליק
נר של חנוכה.

Praised are you, Adonai our God, Ruler of the world, who makes us holy with commandments and commands us to light the Hanukkah candles.

Second Blessing (Thanking God for Making Miracles):

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech ha’olam,
she’asah nisim l’avoteinu bayamin hahem
bazman hazeh.*

ברוך אתה, יי אלהינו, מלך העולם,
שעשה נסים לאבותינו בימים ההם
בזמן הזה.

Praised are you, Adonai our God, Ruler of the world, who made miracles for our ancestors in those days, at this time.

On First Night Only:

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech ha’olam,
she’hecheyanu, v’kiyemanu, v’higyanu lazman hazeh.*

ברוך אתה, יי אלהינו, מלך העולם,
שהחיינו, וקיימנו, והגיענו לזמן הזה.

Praised are you, Adonai our God, Ruler of the world, who has given us life, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this time.